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The Journal of Asian Studies Vol. 72, No. 2 (May) 2013: 1–11.

Book Reviews

JAPAN

Queer Japanese: Gender and Sexual Identities through Linguistic Practices. By Hideko Abe. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. x, 199 pp. $85.00 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0021911813000272

Queer Japanese is a treasure trove of information about the language practices—and language attitudes—of sexual minority speakers of Japanese, an understudied group of speakers, who are critically important to a realistic understanding of the gendered qualities of Japanese, a language that is typically bracketed off in cross-linguistic research as "unique" in having "separate languages" for (heterosexual, heteronormatively aligned) women and men. As with many treasure troves, the reader will find in this volume an untold wealth of information and much food for thought.

Abe centers her investigation of linguistic practice and performance by Japanese sexual minorities around three key questions: *Why* do queer speakers (the author's term) make use of certain linguistic categories, and when? *What* do they hope to accomplish? And *how* do these linguistic forms relate to gender, sexual, and social identities? She stresses gender and gender identities as being fluid, and language as an equally fluid resource through which identities are negotiated. She reminds us that choices of which linguistic resources to deploy are at once macro-socially compelled and micro-interactionally negotiated, a point brought home to us repeatedly in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 1 draws data from advice columns in four gay and lesbian magazines; the focus here is less on the language forms used than on the range of advice offered, showing that advice offered focused on tactical possibilities for resolving problems rather than challenging the dominant heteronormative framework.

We get to language specifics in chapter 2, which focuses on lesbian bar talk. The speech practices outlined in this chapter center around lesbians' search for appropriate first- and second-person pronouns and sentence final forms for use in the bar setting. Pronominal forms and sentence final forms are components of the heteronormatively construed packages of gendered "women's language" and "men's language," so it is hardly surprisingly to find them problematized in the lesbian bar setting. Abe finds that there is both inter- and intra-speaker variation in the pronominal choices and sentence final form choices made in these bars as "lesbians negotiate constraints such as 'feminine' or 'masculine' attached to linguistic features with the insertion of novel meanings and usages" (p. 51). Much, much more work is needed on lesbian speaking practice, but Abe offers us a tantalizing glimpse. As to the particular language forms that are problematized in the lesbian bar scene, we will encounter the negotiated uses of these form sets again in subsequent chapters, so for readers unfamiliar with Japanese, a chart outlining the most stereotypically gendered forms would have been helpful.

The next three chapters deal with the speech of gay men (among whom are included a small number of transgender/transsexual speakers). Chapter 3 examines transcripts of published *zadankai* "round table discussions" with *danshō*, male cross-dressing sex workers in post-WWII Tokyo. Abe introduces some of the features of *onēkotoba*, which Abe glosses as "queen's speech"—a speech style that is associated with performing "gayness" in, for example, gay bars, and media representations of gays—here. Highlighted features are first- and second-person pronouns (p. 62), the frequent use of (feminine) sentence final particles, the use of set phrases associated with feminine speech (e.g., *iya*, *komatchau*), and the use of feminine interjections (e.g., *ara*) (p. 70). Chapter 4 focuses on the contemporary performance of *onēkotoba* on stage. Abe analyzes the 2002 two-character play *Chigau Taiko* (Different drums) as it was scripted by gay writer and bar owner Ōtsuka Takashi versus as it was performed by Ōtsuka and a friend. This chapter reiterates the central roles that pronouns, sentence final particles, and a handful of interjections play in its definition. It also shows, by pointing out the muting of the highly stereotypified feminine forms in the course of performance, how difficult this register is to sustain in practice, a point that I hope the author will pursue in future work. Chapter 4 takes on the issue of *onēkotoba* outside the arena of overt performance to address five claims made by Abe's gay consultants: (1) *onēkotoba* is a product of bar culture; (2) gay men hate *onēkotoba*; (3) *onēkotoba* is a manipulation of women's speech, not an imitation; (4) *onēkotoba* necessarily involves *dokuzetsu* "sharp tongue" (or "prickly") speech; and (5) *onēkotoba* is a parody of women's speech. The opinions of her consultants are quite varied, which is likely a good characterization of the status of *onēkotoba* in the gay community today. Chapter 6 sums up the findings of the previous chapters.

Throughout, this book refers to so many diverse aspects of the Japanese language that it may be hard for non-Japanese-speaking readers to appreciate some of the points made. For those of us who come to this volume with some expertise in Japanese, however, it is a book to which we will return again and again for its wealth of information and its enticing look at a world of "gendered" Japanese that has yet to be fully explored.

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Intimate Distance: Andean Music in Japan. By Michelle Bigenho. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2012. xii, 248 pp. $79.95 (cloth); $22.95 (paper).
doi:10.1017/S0021911813000284

Michelle Bigenho's ambitious and valuable new book represents a welcome contribution on many fronts. Not only does this work introduce a little-known world of Japanese enthusiasts of Andean "folklore" music, but it also reevaluates conceptual dichotomies in popular cultural studies (e.g., appropriation versus appreciation) and postcolonial studies (e.g., domination versus resistance). Drawing on interviews with Japanese fans, and with Japanese and Bolivian performers of the music, as well as participant observation as a performing member of a traveling Andean music group, Bigenho's insightful and sensitive portrayal of a small but vibrant music scene in Japan that has garnered little scholarly attention uncovers a surprising trans-Pacific connection.

Outlining the theoretical tools employed to make sense of this connection, Bigenho proposes "intimate distance" as a key idea, defined as "the pull of desire toward

difference and the contrasting distance that one still maintains while taking on the cultural trappings of an Other" (p. 2). The fans and performers of Andean music frequently refer to the imagined shared ancestry between Japanese and indigenous Bolivians, as the same "Mongols," to explain Japanese love of the music. Bigenho argues that this racialized discourse of intimacy is a product of Japanese and Bolivian nationalist discourses, through which "non-Western Others are getting together and imagining the otherness of the Other whom they see as not so other from themselves" (p. 22).

Chapters 2 and 3 locate Andean music in the global music market and discuss how Bolivian musicians work within this. Andean music garnered worldwide popularity after the release of Simon and Garfunkel's "El Condor Pasa" (1972), a song allegedly inspired by a tune Paul Simon heard in the Peruvian countryside. Japanese audiences, many of whom first encountered Andean music through "El Condor Pasa," continue to expect an exoticized indigeneity from the performers. The touring Bolivian musicians themselves, most of whom are mestizos, feel straightjacketed by the expectation and unable to express their artistry, even if they also proudly claim indigeneity as part of their Bolivian national heritage.

Chapter 4 shifts focus to Japanese fans and performers of the music. Bigenho portrays the Japanese fandom that goes beyond being passive consumption; many become enthusiastic hobbyists and professional performers, taking classes, participating in workshops, and even traveling to live in Bolivia. Why this devotion to the Andean indigenous music? Bigenho's Japanese interviewees frequently express their disdain for the Western or Western-influenced Japanese commercial music scene, and convey a vague feeling of longing that Bolivian music evokes for them. Therefore, Bigenho theorizes, Andean music for these Japanese "develops its nostalgia from an external exotic . . . located in a past" (p. 115).

Chapter 5 tackles the racialized narratives of intimacy expressed by Japanese and Bolivians, who point to their shared instrument types (e.g., Japanese *shakuhachi* and Andean *quena*), pentatonic scale, and even physical characteristics, languages (Japanese and Quechua), and bodily habits (e.g., sleeping on the floor). Bigenho contextualizes these within Bolivian and Japanese nationalisms. While Bolivia's nationalist projects, such as *mesizaje* (race mixing) and multiculturalism, placed the "management of racially inscribed indigeneity" (p. 138) at its center, modern Japan's nationalism emerged as a racial project of building a "yellow" empire, vis-à-vis "white" Western powers, encompassing diverse Asian peoples. Both nationalisms are, Bigenho argues, "motivated by a common desire to distinguish self-other relations that fall outside the ongoing implicit location of many such positionings relative to the United States" (p. 147).

In chapter 7, Bigenho addresses her positionality during fieldwork, as a white American, or *gringa*, anthropologist trained as Latin Americanist touring among Japanese and Bolivian musicians. During the research she often felt alienated from her Japanese and Bolivian companions, whose "narratives worked along an East-West axis and implicitly placed [her], the gringa who plays Bolivian music, on the other side, with the West. Imagined indigeneity afforded the Bolivians and Japanese common access to a category of the non-West" (p. 157). In defending her lack of linguistic and intellectual expertise in Japanese studies to write this book, Bigenho argues that the surprising and unsettling situations she faced helped shape her research "precisely at the intersections of these unequal preparations" (p. 151). Her concluding chapter emphasizes the two main arguments: the centrality of the idea of race in nationalism and transnationalism, and intimacy as a potent theoretical tool for addressing social inequality in global popular cultural studies and postcolonial studies. For all of this, she has abundant ethnographic evidence and has presented it skillfully.

While it is hard to find criticism for a well-researched and well-written book, Bigenho's attempt to explain the Japanese-Bolivian connection could be enhanced. Although Bolivian and Japanese nationalisms may provide an important ideological backdrop, other, perhaps less ideological, factors, such as Japanese masses' long fascination with archaeology in general and the Andean civilization and Inca empire in particular, along with the history of Japanese foreign aid to Bolivia and resulting Japanese presence there, as well as Japanese society's voracious adoption of "foreign" popular cultures generally, could contextualize the transnational nexus in a more grounded manner. Bigenho need not defend her position as a Latin Americanist researching in Japan, since the classic ideal of complete immersion in an ethnographic "field" is nowadays largely recognized as illusory anyway; she could have, however, explored a wider range of Japanese-language sources on Japanese affection for Bolivian folk culture and Bolivians' acceptance of Japanese fans and performers. In this regard, her Latin Americanist background might indeed have limited her research. This minor quibble aside, Bigenho's engaging ethnography is a valuable resource on popular culture and (trans)nationalism in Japan, and it offers a welcome departure from the tired West versus East dichotomy that has long dominated theories of cultural globalization.

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Tokyo Cyberpunk: Posthumanism in Japanese Visual Culture. By Steven T. Brown. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. ix, 256 pp. $95.00 (cloth); $28.00 (paper).
doi:10.1017/S0021911813000296

In *Tokyo Cyberpunk*, Steven Brown analyzes feature-length and serial anime and live-action films that engage with unsettling questions about what it means to be (post) human in a time and place not so distant from the present. Brown and the works upon which he directs his primary focus render everyday human experiences uncanny as they address questions of subjectivity, agency, and the possibility of resistance in hyperconnected worlds populated by robots, gynoids, ghosts, cyborgs, and disembodied humans running amok.

Drawing on the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Brown reads these texts "rhizomatically." That is, rather than offering a linear, hierarchical narrative analysis, Brown views these films and anime "tangentially through their rhizomatic connections with other anime, other films, other works of art, and other discursive formations" (p. 9). This approach seems particularly apt for many of the complicated works of Japanese film and anime engaging with the troubling implications of posthumanism. In the introduction, Brown offers Ōtomo Katsuhiro's highly complex and influential feature-length cyberpunk anime *Akira* (1988; based on a manga serialized in 1982–90) as one such example. *Akira*, he writes, "encourages rhizomatic reading by evoking the processes of nonhierarchical connections" through "diverse smaller narratives, codes, and memes, offering a horizontal image of thought where anything may be linked to anything else without requiring vertical notions of a metanarrative" (p. 9), an ascription that can be applied, more or less, to the five other works of anime and live-action film Brown goes

on to explore. The result of his rhizomatic reading is a delightful excursion full of twists and turns, some inevitable, some surprising.

The book is divided into three parts, each centered around one or two Japanese works. In the first—and, to me, the richest—part, Brown peels apart layers of visual, aural, and narrative complexity in Oshii Mamoru's highly intertextual feature-length anime *Ghost in the Shell II: Innocence* (2004). In *Innocence*, Oshii contemplates how humans might relate to the various *ningyō*—"dolls, puppets, automata, androids, and cyborgs" (p. 13)—that increasingly populate the world. *Innocence* is richly citational, drawing on religious (the Buddha, Confucius, the Bible), literary (Milton, Zeami), scientific (Richard Dawkins), and other texts. Some of this citation is visual, including Japanese automata and a disturbingly erotic series of photographs of dolls created by German surrealist Hans Bellmer in the 1930s. The latter inspired the murderous gynoids at the heart of the narrative.

Part 2 focuses on Tsukamoto Shin'ya's live-action film *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989), which Brown reads in the context of Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927), David Cronenberg's *The Fly* (1986), and the tentacle-ridden erotic horror anime *Urotsukidōji: Legend of the Overfiend* (1987), among other works. Brown parses the film to show how Tsukamoto "deconstructs the essentializing identification of masculinity with phallic dominance and violence" (p. 56) in a text that explores the eroticization of male cyborgs/androids and loss of identity.

In part 3, Brown looks at Kurosawa Kiyoshi's *Kairo* (2001; released in English as *Pulse*) and Oshii Mamoru's *Avalon* (2001), two live-action films that reflect on the implications of being haunted by "electronic presence," that is, the "liveness" (p. 112) of communication technology from telegraphs to cyberspace to virtual reality. Kurosawa's horror film meditates on social withdrawal (*hikikomori*) and the dehumanizing implications of technology through parallel narratives wherein ghosts are increasingly populating the world and a virus is spreading over the Internet, infecting individuals with the desire to withdraw from society and then to kill themselves. Shot in Poland, Oshii's *Avalon* engages with issues of authoritarian surveillance and oppression, virtual reality, disaffected youth, and individual agency, "offer[ing] an implicit critique of the society of the spectacle by showing the isolation and alienation produced by the totalitarianism of spectatorship" (p. 140).

Finally, in the conclusion Brown uses Nakamura Ryūtarō's thirteen-part anime series *Serial Experiments Lain* (1989) to revisit and rethink through the issues of posthumanism considered in the preceding chapters. Nakamura's series tarries with the tension between embodiment in the real world and disembodiment in the "Wired" and a simultaneous desire for both. Lain's ultimate realization "that her everyday life includes aspects that are both embodied *and* virtual" (p. 183) opens up space for resistance.

In sum, Brown has deftly—and rhizomatically—woven together films and anime by Oshii Mamoru, Ōtomo Katsuhiro, Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Nakamura Ryūtarō, and Tsukamoto Shin'ya with major and obscure works of European, American, and Japanese cinema and anime; iconic photography and other graphic art; and film and literary criticism and theory. Given the vastness of this textual and theoretical archive, however, it is surprising that so few of the critical and theoretical texts upon which Brown draws come from Japan itself. While "posthumanism is profoundly transnational" and there is, thus, "no Japanese posthumanism per se," as Brown points out, it does "come to be inflected in certain ways by the cultural forms and practices specific to Japanese visual culture of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries" (p. 159). It seems a shame, then, that Brown engages so briefly with the fertile body of criticism and theory written from the context of Japan. Nevertheless, in his own critical and genealogical examination of these works of film

and anime, Brown makes a highly important contribution to Japanese visual studies as a whole. The result is an enjoyable and eminently readable text, which, in spite of Brown's extensive engagement with critical and cultural theory, is written in language accessible to undergraduate students. It will be very much at home in Japanese studies courses focused on film, anime, and popular culture, as well as film and cultural studies courses focused on science fiction, technology, and posthumanism.

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The Demimonde in Japanese Literature: Sexuality and the Literary Karyūkai. By Cynthia Gralla. Amherst, N.Y.: Cambria Press, 2010. 300 pp. $114.99 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0021911813000302

Starting in the seventeenth century, many major Japanese cities included spaces that catered to pleasure seekers, where a consumer could purchase sex and more significantly the fantasy of pleasure and beauty outside of the strictures of everyday life. Quarters dedicated to entertainment and erotic commerce, such as the Yoshiwara in Edo, were known not only to the customers who visited but more widely through vivid evocations in the visual arts, on the kabuki and bunraku stage, and in prose fiction. The pleasure quarter's proximity to theaters was no accident, for both existed on the fringes of proper society and offered engagement in stories apart from the quotidian. The pleasure quarter as an urban space persisted through the mid-twentieth century, though with an altered relationship to the city and society in the modern era. From the Meiji to the present, the notion of a demimonde has continued to draw in many artists and writers, such as Higuchi Ichiyō and Nagai Kafū. Cynthia Gralla's book *The Demimonde in Japanese Literature* explores artistic engagements with the Japanese demimonde in modern Japanese literature, film, photography, and dance. The book offers close readings of artists and thinkers as diverse as Kuki Shūzō and Murakami Ryū, as the author discovers shared themes of contested boundaries, liminality, eroticism, and aesthetics in their pursuit of this place or state of mind called the demimonde.

Through the twentieth century, the *karyūkai* (the Japanese term that Gralla uses to designate the areas of the city) was sometimes resonant with nostalgia for the aesthetic and social fantasy of the Tokugawa pleasure quarters, and, at others, regarded as a source of contamination to bourgeois and national values. Gralla is interested in the demimonde as "a peripheral space of concentrated, commodified, staged eroticism" but also features the people who "embody such a fringe erotic lifestyle" and embrace transgression (p. 11). Other aspects of the demimonde thus broadly understood are "a malleable temporality" that tends to the circular rather than the linear, and the shift away from an "actual space" to an "imaginative space," a space that "plays on a dialectic of otherness and containment" (pp. 7, 11). The author regards the cultural expressions related to these conceptions as part of the demimonde and its "subculture of resistance" (p. 12). This broad conception of the demimonde allows Gralla to include in her study everything from Nagai Kafū's nostalgic *Tamanoi* to the prostitutes working so vividly in burnt-out ruins of Tokyo in Tamura's *The Gate of Flesh*, and the closed world of a rundown geisha house in Kōda Aya's *Nagareru*. Other Japanese works that Gralla brings into the category of demimonde

include Tanizaki's *Naomi*, Murakami Ryū's *Almost Transparent Blue*, and his film *Topāzu*. At points, she comments on the tension between performances and imagination of the demimonde and the Japanese empire's odious practice of "comfort women."

Gralla proves herself a careful and astute reader and critique of works in a range of media. To her credit, she includes a significant comparative component by reading Japanese novels against European, American, Middle Eastern, and Chinese literary works. The author also delves extensively into critical and theoretical stances on the demimonde, eroticism, taboo and transgression, trauma (national and personal), nostalgia, the city, and the figure of the *flaneur*.

One of the most interesting and original chapters is "Dancing the Interior Demimonde," which offers analysis of writer and controversial cultural figure Mishima Yukio (and photographs of him by Hosoe Eikoh), and an especially intriguing reading of *butoh* performer Ohno Kazuo as "demimondaine" (pp. 211–32). In her commentary on Ohno's renowned work "Admiring La Argentina," the author clarifies her broad use of the concept of the demimonde in terms of space, gender, and art, noting that Ohno "dragged behind him, in his lace train, a theatrical space filled with the essence of multiple artistic and erotic subcultures" (p. 229). Also compelling are her reading of Murakami Ryū's controversial novel *Almost Transparent Blue* (1976), in which drugs "facilitate the creation of a personal demimonde of heightened physicality and imagination" (p. 171), and her careful analysis of space and interiority in Kōda Aya's novel *Nagareru* (1955).

While much of Gralla's literary and cultural analysis is thought provoking and thorough, some of the chapters suffer from repetition and would have benefited from an editor's firm hand. One also wishes for greater engagement with the work of Japanese scholars and theorists, beyond the easily accessible and translated work of premier critics such as Isoda Kōichi and Maeda Ai.

The Demimonde in Japanese Literature will be of interest to students and scholars of comparative literature and Japanese studies.

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Bonds of the Dead: Temples, Burial, and the Transformation of Contemporary Japanese Buddhism. By Mark Rowe. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011. xv, 258 pp. $91.00 (cloth); $29.00 (paper).
doi:10.1017/S0021911813000314

Mark Rowe has provided us with a rich and insightful critical inquiry into one of the most common assumptions about contemporary Japanese Buddhism, namely, that it is a "funerary religion" and that this fact is inextricably tied to its long-standing decline. His innovative analysis of recent to current developments is based upon almost a decade of fieldwork and study pertaining to innovations in Buddhist and non-Buddhist funerary "technology." He focuses on the "Eternal Memorial Grave," an innovative form of Buddhist grave that is accessible to individuals independent of their family and parishioner status, but he also addresses other alternatives to traditional funerals, such as the scattering of ashes and its main supporter, the "Grave-Free Promotion Society" (the object of a recent study by Satsuki Kawano), thus providing for valuable contextualization. Notably,

his analysis also takes account of a broad range of materials, from interviews to pamphlets and academic reports.[5]

Rowe's analysis does not completely reverse the received view of Buddhism as a funerary religion. But throughout the book he convincingly presents Japanese Buddhism as a religion that is alive and currently struggling to renew itself, not least through the reinvention and renegotiation of its link to mortuary ritual. Although the ultimate success of this renovatory process cannot be predicted—and Rowe is very careful not to overstep the line from analysis to prophesy—he gives ample evidence that there is a willingness by Buddhist experts, from academic centers to local temples, to face the problems at hand and to come up with novel doctrinal and practical solutions. And these solutions are welcomed beyond the limits of those excluded from the benefits of traditional ancestor worship. In fact, Rowe also does much to shed light on the genealogy of the perceived contradiction between lofty doctrine and pedestrian popular custom, and to question this core tenet of the concept of "funerary Buddhism"—although this is one point deserving of further attention and analysis. His presentation of two sides of Buddhist institutions (local temples and academic centers) alongside with the perspectives of those making use of the innovative funerary solutions also provides rich material for reflection on the concomitant dichotomy between the "purely religious" and the "economical" side of Buddhist institutions.

This work consists of a vivid exposition of the problem, as well as the research objectives and methods, organized into an introduction and six main chapters. They elaborate on the history and interpretation of "funerary Buddhism" in Japan (chapter 1) and contemporary graves and the incentives and ideas behind innovative funeral technologies such as the Buddhist Eternal Memorial Grave (chapter 2). The book also features case studies of one rural Nichiren temple (chapter 3) and one metropolitan Rinzai Zen temple (chapter 4) that offer Eternal Memorial Graves in addition to the traditional parishioner grave, and discusses a nondenominational alternative initiative to replace graves with the scattering of ashes (chapter 5) and the role of Buddhist "sectarian" (Rowe's terminology) academic centers (chapter 6). The short conclusion presents something like a management summary of the study and its results. This section is highly recommended for the hurried reader but largely redundant for those who have read their way through the volume so far—which is made easy by Rowe's clear and multifaceted presentation of perspectives on a problem that is, after all, facing us all in one way or another.

On the whole, I was convinced by Rowe's argument that mortuary practices are an essential domain for investigations into the state of contemporary Japanese Buddhism, and that the innovations that were the main object of his study show the potential for a remodeling of the relationship between Buddhist temples and the laity. He presents ample material that elucidates not only the fact that Japanese Buddhism is "alive" and not necessarily dying, but also the mode of how it is "lived" in multiple negotiations of doctrine, custom, spirituality, and economy. I also fully subscribe to the programmatic connection he draws between doctrinal and ethnographical study (pp. 7–10). And I was particularly impressed by the both sympathetic and circumspect way in which Rowe presents this material—such as when he complements his report of the fact that the priest who invented the Eternal Memorial Grave at Tōchōji (the Tokyo Rinzai temple) wanted the money for a renovation of his temple to come from "religious activities" with a footnote that money so generated would then be exempt from tax (p. 125, n. 22), and on the next page reports how the involvement of a private company in the running of this temple's

[5]Satsuki Kawano, *Nature's Embrace: Japan's Aging Urbanites And New Death Rites* (Honolulu: University of Hawaìi Press, 2010])

Eternal Memorial Grave has led one member of staff to "consider taking the tonsure" (p. 126)—thus showing in detail how the commercial-economical and spiritual elements may interact in various, and not necessarily conflicting, ways.

Rowe touches an important point of the "grave problem" and the "grave-free solution" when he mentions the importance of the presence of physical objects immediately connected to the deceased (not necessarily bodily remains, p. 119) to the functioning of a memorial site (p. 172). And he demonstrates a subtle but important shift in Japanese perceptions of the dead, away from the idea of pacification and moving towards images of the dead being assured of a peaceful resting place (pp. 118–19). This seems to contrast with another shift in the perception of cremated remains, namely that in distinction to earlier periods, cremation seems no longer to function as a way to purify the remains and to draw a secure line between the dead and the living—a fact Rowe reflects upon (pp. 176–77), but does not put in historical perspective.

Two limitations in terms of the scope of his argument stem from his double focus on innovation and on Buddhism as a religion: we do not learn much about the motivation of the (dwindling?) majority that holds on, however tenaciously, to the traditional form of the temple parishioner's family grave (but there is a telling section on "parishioner reaction" to Tōchōji's Eternal Memorial Grave in chapter 4, pp. 132–36), and we learn next to nothing about the perspective of what is, in Rowe's own analysis, the biggest player in the field, that is, the "funeral industry" (pp. 37–38). To request such additional inquiries may be asking too much of an already rich and plural-perspective study. But Rowe's insistence on the significance of the innovations in Buddhist funeral technology he describes would surely have warranted a more explicit reflection on the effects of their exclusion. In terms of methodology, I think this study would have further profited from a more stringent adherence to questions of status and other this-worldly benefits connected with funerals that Rowe exposes in his historical review of "funerary Buddhism," especially in the subsection on Meiji funeral procession (pp. 32–35). In reading this passage, I was half expecting him to draw a connection to Bourdieu's theory of distinction and symbolical capital, which I think would have provided for a useful matrix for the interpretation of his informants' perspectives. Finally, Rowe opens up a transnational comparative perspective in his introduction that would definitively be worth pursuing, but he never comes back to it in the later course of his analysis. All this is to say that I think Rowe's book deserves to be read and discussed widely by scholars and students of Japanese and comparative religion, and that I hope to see it followed up by complementary studies.

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Pilgrimages to the Ancient Temples in Nara: Koji junrei. By Watsuji Tetsurō. Translated by Hiroshi Nara. Portland, Maine: MerwinAsia, 2012. xxxv, 202 pp. $35.00 (paper).
doi:10.1017/S0021911813000326

In May 1918, philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō (1889–1960) embarked on a tour of Nara's temples "to enjoy the power of ancient art, to cleanse my mind, and enrich it" (p. 10). By

then he had already obtained his degree in philosophy from Tokyo Imperial University (1912) and had developed a great interest in Japan's cultural history (p. xiv). The memoir of his journey, *Koji junrei*, appeared first in installments (1918) and then as a volume in 1919; Hiroshi Nara now brings us an English translation in an elegant book complemented by beautiful photographs that bring Watsuji's description to life.

Readers expecting a traditional travel diary, with entries on the weather, the food, and the mundane, will not recognize *Koji junrei* as such: the descriptions of train journeys and exhausted bodies, of potholes and annoying people, are few and far between. Less "travel diary" and more "museum catalog meets collection of scattered thoughts," *Koji junrei* is Watsuji's occasion to muse on the function of art, the relationship between past and present, and (as Nara suggests in his introduction), "the significance of Japanese culture in world history" (p. xxviii).

Art, to Watsuji, is a source of spiritual enlightenment. His chapters are peppered with allusions to the "ecstasy achieved through art" (p. 7) and to the "enrapturing experience[s]" (p. 51) and "otherworldly mood[s]" (p. 149) art engenders. When he uses art pieces as portals into the Nara period, Watsuji is at his narrative best; a skilled storyteller, he uses vivid imagery to offer a masterful depiction of the consecration ceremony for the Great Buddha (p. 78). Other times, however, he veers toward the technical and quickly turns pedantic—few readers, I suspect, will find his ruminations on "the rate at which the distance between pillars [at the Golden Hall of Tōshōdaiji] becomes narrower" (p. 98) especially riveting.

As a place in which antiquity and modernity coexist, the city of Nara prompts Watsuji to elaborate on the relationship between past and present. To be sure, there is more "past" than "present" in his jottings, but the two occasionally intersect—for example, with steam-engine trains crossing timeless landscapes (p. 77), or with the shiny halls and statues of old now covered in grime (p. 28). The collision of past and present yields to melancholy and triggers recollections of Watsuji's own childhood. On these occasions the reader catches a quick glimpse of Watsuji the man—a rare treat, for he usually remains distant and elusive, and lets the art take center stage.

In a site brimming with glimpses of Chinese and continental history, Watsuji also attempts to define Japan's place in the world—not so much from a geopolitical stance but from a cultural one. Readers familiar with the ideas of the mature Watsuji will find hardly any comment to warrant his later characterization as a "harbinger of *nihonjinron*" (p. xvii). In *Koji junrei*, the young Watsuji embraces Nara's cosmopolitanism and its adherence to the Chinese model, celebrates the fact that "Japanese creativity … was actually borne out of foreign culture" (p. 110) and that the "many foreigners … who participated very actively in the creation of [Nara] culture … are our ancestors—both spiritually and physiologically" (p. 120). He also strives to find Greek roots for several manifestations of Japanese art, from *gigaku* (p. 64) to paintings (pp. 4–5). (In the introduction he penned in 1946 for a reprint, Watsuji confesses to being mildly embarrassed by some aspects of his book and admits he would now write something entirely different; pp. 1–2.)

Nara's introduction details the historical background of *Koji junrei* and sheds light onto Watsuji's philosophical trajectory. It also provides keys to interpret Watsuji's mindset at the time of the trip to Nara—for example, hinting at the tensions between East and West or at Watsuji's struggle in choosing between moral imperatives and the pleasures of life (pp. x–xii). While Nara effectively compares *Koji junrei* to Goethe's *Italian Journey* (something Watsuji does himself, p. 31), I would have liked to see Nara contextualize *Koji junrei* more widely against the Japanese tradition of travel literature. Sitting on my desk, for example, is Takamure Itsue's (1894–1964) *Musume*

junreiki.[6] We have here two journeys taken in the same year by two iconic figures of Japan's interwar period, both of whom were writing "before they were famous," so to speak, and for the purpose of being published. Yet, we also have two very different ways to engage with the landscape and with the readers: Takamure can be amusingly self-deprecating or annoyingly snobbish, yet she is always there, in the picture, within the grasp of the readers; Watsuji, by contrast, tends to be humorless and distant, if not altogether removed from the scene. To be clear, I am not saying that one work is better than the other; rather, I would suggest reading the two in conjunction to get a full grasp of the many opportunities for nostalgia, discovery, and self-introspection travel (still) afforded in the Taishō era.

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[6]*The 1918 Shikoku Pilgrimage of Takamure Itsue: An English Translation of* Musume junreiki, translated by Susan Tennant (Bowen Island, BC: Bowen Publishing, 2010).